

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application.

1-23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently amended) A method for producing a filler affixed fiber structure containing a filler-affixed fiber including a fiber, a binder resin on a surface of the fiber ~~surface~~, and a filler affixed to the binder resin, comprising:

~~supplying providing~~ a filler-dispersed solution in which the filler is dispersed to the fiber that has a binder resin thereon and is in a form of fiber strucutre, and structure,

next, performing heat-and-humidity treatment on the binder resin that includes heat-and-humidity gelling resin in a heat and humidity atmosphere to cause the heat-and-humidity gelling resin to gel, so that the filler is affixed to the surface of the fiber ~~surface~~ by the binder resin that has been subjected to heat and humidity to form a gel material, ~~and~~ forming a filler-affixed fiber,

wherein the heat and humidity atmosphere has a temperature range from not less than the gelling temperature of the heat-and-humidity gelling resin to not more than the melting point minus 20°C,

wherein the heat-and-humidity treatment comprises exposing the fiber to steam while substantially preserving a fiber form ~~is a treatment performed with steam,~~

wherein the heat-and-humidity gelling resin is in a gel state when subjected to heat and humidity,

wherein the fiber and the binder resin are at least one combination selected from among:

(I) conjugate fiber that includes a heat-and-humidity gelling resin fiber component and another thermoplastic synthetic fiber component,

(II) a mixture of the conjugate fiber of (I) and another fiber, and

(III) a mixture of the conjugate fiber of (I) and heat-and-humidity gelling resin,

wherein the filler affixed fiber structure is produced with the fiber and the binder resin, and

wherein a heat-and-humidity gelling conjugate fiber is formed by the fiber and the binder resin, the heat-and-humidity gelling conjugate fiber including a heat-and-humidity gelling resin fiber component and another thermoplastic synthetic fiber component.

25-27. (Canceled)

28. (Currently amended) The method for producing a filler affixed fiber structure according to claim 24, wherein the filler-dispersed solution is an aqueous solution or an aqueous solution that includes a heat-and-humidity gelling resin.

29-31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently amended) The method for producing a filler affixed fiber structure according to claim 24, wherein the heat-and-humidity gelling resin is ethylene-vinyl alcohol copolymer resin.

33. (Currently amended) The method for producing a filler affixed fiber structure according to claim 24, wherein the average particle diameter of the filler is in a range of 0.01 to 100 μm .

34. (Currently amended) The method for producing a filler affixed fiber structure according to claim 24, wherein the filler is inorganic particles.

35. (Currently amended) The method for producing a filler affixed fiber structure according to claim 34, wherein the inorganic particles are at least one selected from alumina, silica, tripoli, diamond, corundum, emery, garnet, flint, synthetic diamond, boron nitride, silicon carbide, boron carbide, chrome oxide, cerium oxide, iron oxide, colloid silicate, carbon, graphite, zeolite, titanium dioxide, kaolin, clay, and silica gel.

36. (Currently amended) The method for producing a filler affixed fiber structure according to claim 24, wherein the filler includes porous particles.

37-46. (Canceled)

47. (New) The method for producing a filler affixed fiber structure according to claim 24, wherein exposing the fiber to steam while substantially preserving a fiber form comprises exposing the fiber to steam in an inner chamber.